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## World-Modeling Possibilities of the Speech Genre Administrative Announcement in the City Discourse

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### Abstract

In the article the world-modeling possibilities of the administrative announcement in the Russian language are considered. As a complex of informative and imperative speech genre of natural and official written language, it registers changes in communication and culture and plays an important role in social interaction regulating. It functions in different communication fields and represents features of corresponding discourse types remaining the integrate speech genre. Our research allows making a conclusion that last time there is a trend to use informal unofficial forms of announcements that is reflective of modern communicative situation.

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### 1. Introduction

Technological progress and development of civilization determine social and cultural processes in the society. These processes lead to transformations in human's mind. Study of these transformations is one of the main tasks of the Humanities – psychology, sociology, cultural linguistics, linguistics and many others. Study of perception of the world is paid with special attention so that allows revealing how to influence people's mind.

By now linguistics has had a vast store of knowledge that describes communicative strategies, tactics and main principles of influence on society by means of language. A language system hasn't been still considered as a means of image-making of a city, while citizens and guests of the city perceive it by means of its linguistic representation

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in Mass Media, signboards, and announcements. Thus, the actuality of the research is determined by description of linguistic modeling mechanism of a city's image by means of announcements. The fact that the research task is included into interdisciplinary paradigm of modern science proves the actuality of the research.

The article is aimed at revealing modeling potential of Administrative Announcement (further **AA**) while creating the linguistic image of the city in the mind of its citizens and guests. Communicative space of the city is a cross point for different forms and styles of communication, and is characterized by polydiscursiveness. Specific features of each of the city discourses can be revealed at different levels, the linguistic one is shown up in the usage of various linguistic means. Different communicative sphere and discourses are interconnected by means of speech genres. The modern communicative situation is featured by the emergence of new speech genres (teleconference, text messages, debates, advertising booklet, etc.), and by the transformation of content and formal structure of existing speech genres. Administrative announcement as an integral part of the city is notable for dynamics that demonstrates specific of modern communication.

City is a combination of different forms of people's activity – social, economic, aesthetic, everyday – that is reflected in different forms of city communication. Yakovenko considers a city as a special integrative entity which comprises different dialogues and sayings, and, keeping the integrity of society, makes a worldview, develops its own style, local culture, perception of the world, unique architectural look (Yakovenko, 1999). As Mikhaylukova believes, a city language is a scope of diverse language formations (living speech of citizens and city epigraphy) that interact with each other and form a complex system within the city (Mikhaylukova, 2013). Thus, a city is regarded as complex multi-aspect and dynamic phenomenon, which study is of a great importance for linguistics. By now a great amount of the city speech descriptions has been collected: the actuality and importance of the research had been determined (Larin, 1977; Krasil'nikova, 1990), there had been made the analysis of toponymic (Shkatova, 1988; Gorlanova, 2006; Evsukova, 2008; Starikova, 2007), urbanonymic (Leshinskaya, 2008), cultural (Lotman, 2002; Koshirelova, 2006) aspects of city discourse.

The discourse is formed by the speech genres as its structure elements, taken as ready-made structures having micro-modeling potential and discursive specifics (Voloshina, Demeshkina, 2012). The object of the research is a speech genre of administrative announcement, which is regarded as an informative-imperative speech genre mostly represented by short written texts placed in public places and aimed at inducing people to act. Mikhaylukova (2013) thinks that such texts of city environment reflect language and national and cultural specific of a city.

**AA** is considered as a genre of a natural and official written language and has some particular features. Firstly, it appears in written form which provides a function of mediation and openness, non-limited number of addressants. Secondly, the natural way of expression should be distinguished (absence of specialized attitude to the written form, "non-professionalism"). Lebedeva (2001) notes that the natural way of expression on the one hand presupposes ease and spontaneity, demonstration the author's personality. On the other hand, a necessity to create the text according to determined cultural clichés demands more "stiffness" in comparison with oral speech, constraint because of "intimidation upon authority of the letter" (Lebedeva, 2001). An important characteristic of **AA** is its official grade which is a basic principle for the analysis of formalization potential character (Sologub, 2008).

## 2. Analysis of the speech genres of city discourse study

### 2.1. Material

The research corpus comprises 700 administrative announcements collected from 2005 to 2014 in Russian cities. Original grammar, punctuation, and spelling have been preserved. An administrative announcement serves as the research material which has following characteristics: 1) it performs an administrative function of people's social interaction regulation in communication process; 2) communicative status of an addressant is higher than that one of an addresser, so the addressant dictates certain actions to the addressee; 3) communicative situation has three main features: firstly, it is mediated in time and space – they can't be read immediately at the moment of creation; secondly, there is such state of things that is needed to be changed, prevented, or kept in a given state; thirdly, an addresser as a rule has a lack of time when reading the announcement; 4) time parameters of an announcement are notable for determined "expiry date", that is a period of time in which an announcement is valid; 5) communicative

purpose of the statement is to provide an addresser with information and make him act; 6) effectiveness of an AA becomes apparent on extra-linguistic level and is reflected in the addresser's actions.

## 2.2. Results and discussion

AA is a complex phenomenon, a text that combines natural and artificial principles and is aimed at certain extra-linguistic results. AA functions in different communicative spheres: in transport, shop, educational institutions, public catering establishments, on the streets and other public places where there is a need to manage people's behaviour. Depending on the communicative sphere, AA acquires proper lexical content and stylistics. Being independent of communicative conditions, AA exists as a stable model with characteristic genre principles (Karpova, 2014). Time developed traditions of creating AA. In accordance with these traditions AA should be short, clear and follow the rules of speech etiquette. For example:

(1) *Дверь не закрывать! Ждем врача. (Don't close the door! Waiting for a doctor).*

(2) *Соблюдайте чистоту! (Keep clean!)*

For the sake of economy an author decided that it is possible to neglect the rules of speech etiquette. It is quite reasonable because communicative purpose of the message is achieved under lack of time. Absence of markers of politeness does not cause any obstacles in perception of the text; on the contrary, it increases the speed of reading and reaching extra-linguistic results.

Kitaygorodskaya and Rozanova remark that "in recent years genre structure of city communication has changed dramatically" (Kitaygorodskaya & Rozanova, 2003). In language these changes appear in strengthening of dialogues in city's oral communication, growth of personality, revival of playing, and carnival elements in city's life. Current changes in social and economic spheres lead to changes in communicative one – democratization, weakening of communicative norms, blurring of lines of communicative spaces. They inevitably transform speech genres that already exist. These changes can be observed in written communication that is now characteristic for the colloquial elements usage (lexical, syntactical, and stylistic). Demeshkina notes that penetration of colloquial and popular elements of speech has acquired systematic character (Demeshkina, 2011). The tendencies are fully reflected in the speech genre of AA. Compare:

(3) *Вход продавцам и торговым агентам строго воспрещен! (Entry to sales assistants and representatives is strictly prohibited)*

(4) *Прежде чем войти сюда, подумай — нужен ли ты здесь? (Before you enter, think whether you are needed here?)*

In Russian text of AA (3) a desire of the addressant is expressed by the past form of the verb "воспрещать" in the passive voice. This form is characterized by formality, impersonality and objectiveness. In the text (4) the prohibition to enter is expressed indirectly, without a performative. This example shows a dialogic orientation, which is revealed in addressing to personified addresser expressed by the verb in 2<sup>nd</sup> person, singular, which is a feature of informal communication. All the recent changes of the structure and content are aimed at attraction addresser's attention and getting necessary reaction from him/her.

Perception of AA depends on material object, substratum (paper, signboard, etc.), type of writing (handwriting, type font, with pictures, highlighting with colour, etc.), location (notice board, transmission tower, wall in the lift, front door, etc.), and the language form of expressions.

Analysis of Russian AA demonstrates that most of them are made by authors of the announcement themselves by means of computer and are printed on A4 paper. The possibility of handwriting corrective changes is typical for an administrative announcement. It highlights natural character of AA's speech, and it reacts on the situation to prevent negative consequences for participants of communication.

Next announcement is a striking example of dialogic nature of AA:

*Typed: Dear students! You are absolutely forbidden to fix stretchers in the WC.*

*Handwriting: Why?*

*Typed: There is a workshop.*

*Handwriting: There is no water in the workshop.*

*Typed: Staff (handwriting) of the WC. Why staff is against?*

The dialogue is developing in the text of announcement placed on the wall in WC of the educational institution. The announcement is written in an absolutely proper way following all the norms of politeness and full-scale structure containing a direct address, sign and alternative way of acting proposed to the addressee. However an addressee is not satisfied and demands to tell reasons of prohibition, explaining his/her desire to fix the stretcher in the WC because here there is water unlike to the workshop. The fact that participants of communication are anonymous and distant in time and space plays a key role in setting-up a dialogue and provides a good opportunity for addressee to enter in polemics with the staff.

Spatial and graphic parameters of a sign as relation to other semiotics systems are of a great interest too: highlighted by means of writing in colour, with the help of pictures, etc. During the research we found out that there is a tendency to increase in non-standard announcements, the texts of which are accompanied by pictures, unusual style of writing or different colours.

For example: *Use of mobile phones strictly prohibited in a physiotherapeutic room.*

It is necessary to notice that the text of the announcement is typed by means of black-and-white printer but key information is highlighted with different colours and accompanied with visual aids (crossed out mobile phone symbol).

Perception of AA is considerably dependent of its location. They can be located either in special places – notice boards – or in places that are not suitable for placing the announcements. The necessity to manage people's behaviour in changing conditions determines a tendency to place announcements in places where they will be probably read: front doors, bus windows, facades of buildings, etc. As an example we took the AA placed on the tree trunk:

*Don't climb the snow sculptures. Fine is 500 roubles.*

We suppose that a territorial factor influences the official grade of the text. Formal announcements, communicative status of an addressant which allow performing administrative functions, are located in special places; informal announcements (having some colloquial stylistic peculiarities and words and no signs) can be placed almost everywhere.

### 3. Conclusion

AA is one of the speech genres of city discourse which has significant world-modeling potential. Analysis of AA evidences that AA considerably influences the image of the city which is created by citizens and guests of the city. The main parameters that influence the perception of AA are their location, material objects, spatial and graphic positions of a sign, and the language expressions. All these factors determine an official grade of the text that comprises extra-linguistic parameters becoming apparent in addressee's actions. According to the official grade core of meaning, the type of the given speech genre can be outlined. The research of administrative announcement in Russian cities allows making a conclusion that nowadays there is a trend to use its peripheral forms. From our point of view this trend is the reflection of modern communicative situation.

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